

THE HALL of FIRE FAN WEBZINE

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GREETINGS,

Salutations.... Hello All!

It's the great month of February and in the middle of such a wild-weathered time, here I bring you your monthly staple of wondrous works to further enhance your Lord of the Rings gaming experience. This month marks 38 months of goodness and here it is for you: a few dwarves ready to begin on the road to greatness, more information on a few often used skills, a look at Shelob's Lair, and a lot more besides!

Here's to Another Month of Great Gaming!

Matthew Kearns
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Editor

THE HALL OF FIRE

The Unofficial Lord of the Rings RPG Webzine

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ADVENTURING IN

SHELOB'S LAIR

by Matthew "GandalfOffBorg" Kearns

Dank, festering, noxious... the labyrinth in which one of the foulest souls ever to inhabit physical form resides is as close to Hell as one might find in Middle-earth, save for the land upon which it borders. The halls of Shelob stretch on forever in all directions. Most of the passages are hopeless dead ends where the Dark Mistress lays her traps, yet waiting for the lucky are a few passages leading out to the path down to Minas Morgul or on to Cirith Ungol. Perhaps unlucky though, as these "safe" routes are watched keenly by Shelob and her minions.

Some of the paths are hewn rock as delved by the ancient Numenoreans before the time of Shelob's residence, while the rest are naturally cut by water and weather. In many of these, portals and cave-ins provide access between passages, creating the tangled web within in which Shelob weaves her plans. Truly a place of evil itself now, the halls within the mountain pass of the Ephel Duath are choked by no less than four terrifying perils: The Stench, The Darkness, The Webs, and The Spider.

THE STENCH

The Stench is one of Shelob's foul excretions. It permeates the entirety of the lair, yet grows stronger as any come near to the great spider. The Stench causes any who enter the lair to make a TN 5 Stamina test vs. poison and the TN increases by 5 if within 100 yards of Shelob and another 5 if within 20 yards. The Stamina test TN is 20 if one is unlucky enough to attack Shelob from below.

Optional rule: The effects of failing a Stamina test against Shelob's stench is a -2 to all tests, increasing by -2 every time the Stamina TN increases.

THE DARKNESS

The Darkness is the other byproduct of Shelob's endless hunger for life. It is an unnatural inky blackness vomited forth by the foul creature after taking the life of her prey. Torchlight and natural light do little to penetrate The Darkness, illuminating only a 5-yard radius at most. Fire and light created as a spell effect or from an enchanted item work normally according to their description.

THE WEBS

The Webs of Shelob are great sticky cords strung across portals and passageways so as to guide prey to her traps. Shelob takes them down and creates new ones every so often so as to confuse and bewilder those caught within the lair. To her, fear makes the blood of her victims seem like wine.

SHELOB

Finally, Shelob herself is the last obstacle to overcome if you wish to escape her lair. Confronting Her is folly itself as she has almost no equal in dreadful power save for the Dark Lord in his tower or the dragons of the far north (that She is aware). She has many weapons at her disposal besides those listed above. And even if you manage to overcome her (since destroying her would be a great feat), she will lay hidden within her domain, brooding over the many ways she intends to inflict a very long and painful revenge.



Note: All mechanics are optional to those set forth on page 66 of The Two Towers Sourcebook. I did not want to create a picture of the lair as I couldn't do it justice, but I would suggest getting a random dungeon or underground tile set to create a partial map of Shelob's Lair (Moria provides a wonderful set to use).

(Note from David: If you really want to use a pre-made map, I think you could do worse than the following one that I found online via Google Images. I don't know what its original purpose was, and I've whited out some of the descriptive text such as room numbers.)



FAN FLAVOUR

ORDER PACKAGES

by Matt "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

MINER (CRAFTSMAN)

You dig in the earth in search of items of worth: metals, minerals, and gems.

ORDER SKILLS: Appraise +3, Debate (Bargain) +3, Games +2, Observe +2, Smithcraft +2, Stonecraft (Mining) +3

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order Skill

PICK 1 EDGE: Charmed Life, Craftmaster, Friends, Hardy, Hoard



DWARVEN LIEGE (NOBLE)

You are of a noble family within your clan, commanding fealty of your lessers and owing allegiance to the clan's king.

ORDER SKILLS: Armed Combat +3, Debate (Negotiate) +2, Inspire +2, Intimidate +2, Any one Lore +1, Any other one Lore +1, Observe +2, Persuade +2

PICK 5 BONUSES: +1 to any Order Skill

PICK 1 EDGE: Charmed Life, Command, Hoard, Rank, Stern



ELITE ORDERS

by Matt "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

CONSTABLE

You are the keeper of the peace in your hamlet or a captain of the guard for your city. When there is a crisis such as missing people, theft, murder, or some other crime, it is your duty to enforce the law and bring evil-doers to justice.

PREREQUISITES: Lore/Realm +6, Search +7, Track +5; Rank

ORDER SKILLS: Armed Combat, Debate, Intimidate, Inquire, Insight, Lore/Group, Lore/Race, Lore/Realm, Observe, Persuade, Ranged Combat, Search, Track

FAVOURED ATTRIBUTES: Strength, Perception

FAVOURED REACTION: Wisdom



AIR OF COMMAND

(As specified on page 106, Core Rulebook)

CROSS-ORDER SKILL

(As specified on page 98, Core Rulebook)

INQUISITOR

A constable is at his best when investigating a crime.

EFFECTS: Whenever a constable uses Courage for an Order skill test (excluding combat tests), he gains an additional +2 bonus to the normal Courage bonus.

PROTECTOR

(As specified on page 109, Core Rulebook)

TACTICAL ADVANTAGE

(As specified on page 18, *The Hall of Fire*, Issue #16)



ADVOCATE

It is your job to prosecute those apprehended by the constabulary for crimes against the realm or to defend those implicated in a crime.

PREREQUISITES: Debate 6+, Lore/Realm 8+, Persuade 6+; Rank

ORDER SKILLS: Appraise, Debate, Inquire, Insight, Language, Lore/Group, Lore/Race, Lore/Realm, Observe, Persuade, Search

FAVOURED ATTRIBUTES: Perception, Wits

FAVOURED REACTION: Wisdom

MAGISTRATE

Your reputation as an advocate has garnered you fame for your knowledge of the laws and your ability to set precedents for the good of the realm. As such you have been elected or appointed to become a magistrate, a judge if you will, over a town, small region, or even a high court of the realm.

PREREQUISITES: Fame, Renown 5+

EFFECTS: This ability grants you one pick of the Rank edge, up to no greater than Rank 4. Besides this, you are paid a nominal fee for your services, depending on the position you hold, and you gain access to many privileges afforded to royalty or to the very wealthy, even if you are not (Narrator's discretion).

SAVVY

An advocate excels in articulate speech and articles of law.

EFFECTS: Once per game session, an advocate may re-roll a Debate, Language, Lore (as listed in Order Skills), or Persuade test and use the better of the two results.

IMPROVEMENTS: Yes. Each time you take this ability, gain one additional re-roll per game session.

SEEKER OF TRUTH

A good advocate seeks to do what is needed of him, such as prosecute a felon, defend an unsavory client, etc., but a great advocate will also seek the truth so that justice may truly be done.

EFFECTS: Whenever an advocate uses Courage for an Inquire, Insight, Persuade, Search, or Wisdom test, he gains an additional +2 bonus to the normal Courage bonus.

THE EFFECTIVE: MINER

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

BACKGROUND

The CODA system and the game itself almost beckons that you create your character's concept and background before rolling the dice. This Elite Order is fairly straightforward: you are a master digger of the depths of Middle-earth. But to make him truly unique, think about where your character comes from and what his motivations are, and maybe even sketch out a few of his personal goals. This will help both you in focusing your roleplaying and your Narrator in creating side adventures for developing your character. Work with your Narrator to come up with something suitable for the game in which you will be playing.

PREREQUISITES

To become a Miner, you must achieve the following:

- Stonecraft (Mining) 8+
- Strength 8+

(I would also consider placing a racial restriction against Hobbits – they may be diggers for creating their hobbit-holes, but that's the extent of their aim.)

SKILLS

The Miner's skill list is representative of what any of this Order would require for thriving beneath the ground, for mining or other purposes. No other is a match for a Miner underground, unless it be an Earth-reader.

EDGES

There are many traits that may distinguish a Miner in her profession and personally as well, such as Bold, Craftmaster, Curious, Doughty, Hardy, Night-eyed, and Tireless.

FLAWS

The lust for gems and precious metals can be too much for those of the Miner Order, and a number of traits represent their personality failings, such as Arrogant, Dark Heart, Grasping, Proud, and Rival.



ABILITIES

UNDERGROUND SENSE: Along with Travel-sense, a Miner with this ability would know almost, if not exactly, where he is in the world below and in relation to the above ground.

HEW EARTH: Miners with this ability are especially valuable in the droves if sent to breach an enemy stronghold's wall, or if required to make a hasty escape.

HIDDEN MINERALS: This skill would not really be useful in a chronicle unless the goal were to find something specific – say, at the behest of a Wizard's research or the need of a realm.

MASTERY OF STONE: This ability is also of limited use in an average chronicle, unless the Narrator makes a conscious effort to give a player the chance to use stone-related skills.

FREEDOM IN DARK CONFINES: Another useful ability, but only if the adventure were underground.

MULTIPLE ORDERS

As this is such a narrowly-focused Elite Order, there are few Basic or Elite Orders worth having along with this one.

Craftmaster—This Order and the Miner Elite Order practically go hand in hand, and Craftsman is most likely the Order of the character before entering the Miner Order.

Warrior—If Dwarves aren't Warriors, they are Miners typically.

Artificer—With some work, a Miner could become an Artificer since the latter is likely to need to know about metals and precious stones.

Earth-reader—Like the Craftsman, Miner goes quite well with this Order, most likely as a stepping stone to it.

SPELLS

A few spells that might lend aid to a Miner could be Crafting-spell, Create Light, Opening-spell, Resist Fear, Sense Power, Shatter, Shutting-spell, and Sundering.

PLAYING A MINER

A Miner isn't the likeliest of adventurers unless a specific quest is thrust upon him. The best example of miners becoming adventurers would be Thorin and Company in *The Hobbit*.



IT'S ALL OPTIONAL

MANY ORDERS, NO ORDERS

by David "Issachar" D.

As a sort-of conclusion to the "Orders of Magnitude" article series (not that there won't ever be more of those, possibly for Elite Orders), here are a few more thoughts on the Order system, with suggestions for house rules you might find useful.

STICKER SHOCK

Joining a new Order is somewhat of a long-term investment for characters in Decipher's LotR game, since the act of joining the Order eats up 5 picks – a full advancement's worth. The benefits of joining the new Order are thus delayed until the character's next advancement. Especially in games where characters gain advancements slowly, this can be extremely frustrating. Many Narrators already use house rules to reduce this barrier to entry into multiple Orders. Here are a few ideas along those lines.

METHOD 1: REDUCE THE COST OF JOINING A NEW ORDER

The simplest house rule is reducing the cost of joining a new Order from 5 advancement picks to some lower number. But how do you determine where to set the cost so that it's appropriate for your game?

Let's consider the effects of pricing the acquisition of a new Order at 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 advancement picks.



4 PICKS—The most conservative house rule, this leaves the PC with one advancement pick left to spend after joining the new Order. This lets the PC take immediate advantage of one benefit of joining the Order: acquiring a single rank in a skill that was previously a cross-Order skill. It represents a small but tangible token of the training required to enter the new Order.

3 PICKS—Still on the conservative side of things, with effects similar to the 4-pick cost. After joining a new Order for three advancement picks, a PC can spend the two remaining picks on two Order skill ranks, one cross-Order skill rank, one Edge, or one point in a favoured Reaction score.

If you go with the three-pick cost of joining a new Order, I suggest having an additional requirement that the PC must spend the two remaining picks on ranks in skills that are Order skills for the Order he or she just joined.

2 PICKS—This is the big turning point in the cost structure. For some PC's, it's worth paying two advancement picks just for an expanded list of Order skills. Moreover, with three picks left over after joining a new Order, a PC can immediately take an Order ability, which (depending on the ability) may be a rather large jump in power or proficiency.

If you think that the character has had insufficient in-game time to master one of the signature abilities of the new Order, you might prohibit him or her from acquiring an Order ability until the next advancement.

1 PICK—Most people will probably find this too generous for their game. However, there are some Narrators and players who dislike the rigidity of the Order system and feel that while it's an improvement on, say, classes in d20, CODA should have gone even farther. Those who want that much flexibility might view a cost of one pick to join a new Order as an appropriate token payment for the benefit of gaining an expanded Order skill list.

0 PICKS—Allowing PC's to join an Order free of charge makes Orders almost purely a roleplaying element with minimal impact on game mechanics. If your game does not suffer balance issues from PC's with broad ability sets, and you like a wide-open system of character customization, then why not? However, you might also want to consider the suggestions for Order-less games later in this article.

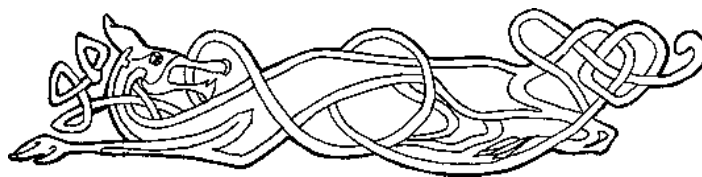


METHOD 2: SPREAD OUT THE COST

When a PC joins a new Order, rather than paying the five advancement picks all up front, he or she could pay them in installments over two or more advancements.

For a conservative rule, require the PC to pay three picks up front and two more on the next advancement, or one pick on each of the next two advancements. This excludes the possibility of the character taking an Order ability immediately upon joining the Order. For a more permissive rule, take two picks up front – a reasonable price for the immediate expansion of Order skills – and then one pick for the next three advancements.

You can also combine this option with the preceding one, for example by requiring a three-pick initial payment followed by one pick on the next advancement, for a total of four picks to join the Order.



METHOD 3: OFFER IMMEDIATE BENEFITS FOR JOINING A NEW ORDER

In my own house rules, each Order has a “Base Order Ability” that PC's gain automatically upon joining. It's a small benefit, but enough to make it seem like those 5 advancement picks didn't *entirely* go down the drain. (Note that beginning characters also receive these abilities for their starting Orders.) The Base Order Abilities are as follows:

BARBARIAN	Land Wise —Identify your home region and the type of terrain that dominates it. In that region, or in any area with the same terrain type, you gain a +1 bonus to all Observe and Survival tests.
CRAFTSMAN	Journeyman —Gain one rank in a single Craft skill, and gain one specialty in the same Craft skill.
LOREMASTER	Field of Study —Gain one rank in a single Lore skill, and gain one specialty in the same Lore skill.
MAGICIAN	Initiate —Gain one spell pick, which must be used to acquire a spell with a TN 5 Stamina test.
MARINER	Water Wise —Gain one rank in Sea-craft, and gain one specialty of the Sea-craft skill.
MINSTREL	Performer —Gain one rank in a single Perform skill, and gain one specialty in the same Perform skill.

NOBLE	Leadership —Treat your Bearing as if one point higher when calculating your Willpower score and when determining whether you meet the prerequisites for an Edge.
ROGUE	Outsider —Within your home region, you suffer -1 to all Inspire and Persuade tests when the target is a member of society in good standing. However, in any region, you gain +1 to Insight and Persuade tests when the target lives or operates outside the mainstream of society.
WARRIOR	Combat Training —Treat your Strength, Nimbleness, and ranks in all Combat skills as if one point higher when determining whether you meet the prerequisites for an Edge.

If you like, you can combine this with the preceding options, offering Base Order Abilities upon joining an Order *and* lowering the cost in advancement picks of joining a new Order, or spreading the cost out over multiple advancements.



DISORDERLY CONDUCT

What if you want to get rid of Orders in your game entirely? Well, you'll need some replacement mechanism for determining which skills are available to characters for 1 pick per rank, and for determining how a character can qualify for abilities that were previously tied to Orders.

You could simply place no restrictions at all on skill selection, and treat Order abilities like Edges (possibly costing three picks instead of two). You could also go for a system that eliminates Orders while retaining the concept of "Order" skills and abilities that some PC's excel at, but not everyone equally. Here I'll describe one example of such a "halfway" system.

With the exception of background Language and Lore skills, treat all skills as "cross-Order" for purposes of determining their cost in picks. Then make available the following Edge, "Favoured Skills". Permit beginning PC's to buy this Edge (at the normal Edge cost of 2 picks) as many times as they like using the picks normally allotted for Order skills during character creation. Most PC's will find a good balance between spending picks on the Edge and spending them on actual ranks in the skills they need.



FAVoured SKILLS

DESCRIPTION: Select up to three skills. (Skills that are part of a skill group must be selected individually.) When purchasing ranks in these skills, you pay only one advancement pick per skill rank. You can purchase this Edge an unlimited number of times, each time selecting a different set of skills.

That takes care of the replacement for Order skills and cross-Order skills. For Order abilities, try keeping the current prerequisites and also adding new prerequisites that represent "virtual" membership in the old Order, such as requiring a minimum number of ranks in Lore/Spellcraft to qualify for Magician abilities.



In the table below, I've defined a set of prerequisites for the abilities of each Order. These prerequisites have two components: a set of skills that must be Favoured Skills for the character (by taking the aforementioned Edge), and a minimum number of ranks in a particular skill.

To Qualify for this Order's abilities...	...PC's must have the following as Favoured skills...	...and must meet the following skill rank requirements.
BARBARIAN	Craft (any), Observe, Survival	5 ranks in Survival
CRAFTSMAN	Appraise, Observe, and one of the following: Craft (any), Smithcraft, Stonecraft	5 ranks in one of the following: Craft, Stonecraft, Smithcraft
LOREMASTER	Inquire, Language (any non-native), Lore (any non-native)	5 ranks in each of any two Lore skills
MAGICIAN	Insight, Lore (any non-native), and one of the following: Debate, Inspire, Intimidate	5 ranks in Lore/Spellcraft
MARINER	Observe, Sea-craft, and one of the following: Acrobatics, Swim	5 ranks in Sea-craft
MINSTREL	Inspire, Lore (any non-native), Perform (any)	5 ranks in any Perform skill
NOBLE	Inspire, Intimidate, Persuade	5 ranks in one of the following: Inspire, Intimidate, Persuade
ROGUE	Legerdemain, Observe, Stealth	5 ranks in Stealth
WARRIOR	Intimidate, Siegecraft, and one of the following: Armed Combat (any), Ranged Combat (any)	5 ranks in one of the following: Armed Combat (any), Ranged Combat (any)

I hope you've gleaned something useful from the Orders of Magnitude series. If you've done interesting things in your game to expand on the function of Orders in the CODA system, write up an article about it and send it in to The Hall of Fire – we'd love to share it!



TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

SKILLS OF SAVVY, PART 1 by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

The goal of this series of articles is to expand upon the concepts for the skills and traits outlined in the CRB and elsewhere. For skills, I aim to include descriptions of new and listed (where needed) skills, define sources of affinity and other bonuses, and maybe some optional rules. For traits, I will discuss more in-depth uses, slight alterations to their effects, and give an outline to define how to create your own traits pertaining to test bonuses (skill, attribute, test type, etc.).



INSIGHT

DESCRIPTION: You are able to read the hearts and minds of those you meet, able to easily discern their motives.

RELATED EDGES: Honour's Insight

RELATED FLAWS: None

RELATED ABILITIES: Courtier (Noble, CRB)

RELATED SPELLS: None

NEW FEATURES

This skill is an often underused and misunderstood skill. Honestly, its function is much the same as a Perception (this skill's related attribute is Perception) or Wisdom test, so one can understand why it would be difficult to think of when this skill would be useful. First, I would use this skill instead of a Perception test if a character had ranks in the skill. Second, have PC's use this skill when they are actively attempting to discern the motivations of NPC's. Finally, use this skill if players are having trouble determining what to do next or as a means to point them in a direction if intraparty debate takes too long.

INSPIRE

DESCRIPTION: By appearance or action, you are able to rally the morale of those around you.

RELATED EDGES: None

RELATED FLAWS: None

RELATED ABILITIES: Noble Mien (Noble, CRB), Leadership (Captain, CRB), Imposing (Wizard, CRB)

RELATED SPELLS: Display of Power, Resist Fear

NEW FEATURES

To me, the effects of the first suggested way to use Inspire seem too little. Intimidate for fear effects are quite powerful... really too powerful to be opposed by a reaction, especially when PC's encounter creatures with the Terror ability. Inspire, in my opinion, should do a little more than grant another Willpower test with a measly +4 max bonus. It is my suggestion that the Inspire test reduce the severity by one level on the Fear Effects table per level of success of the Inspire test – after all, the Inspire test's TN is the Intimidate test result.



INTIMIDATE

DESCRIPTION: The power of your presence can cause those around you to cower with a mere glance in their direction.

RELATED EDGES: Stern

RELATED FLAWS: Tiresome

RELATED ABILITIES: Noble Mien (Noble, CRB), Imposing (Wizard, CRB)

RELATED SPELLS: Call Fell Beast, Display of Power, Evoke Awe, Evoke Fear, Shadow of Fear

NEW FEATURES

None.



FEATURED CREATURES

BERANDEORC by David "Issachar" D.

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 8 (+1), Nimbleness 9 (+1), Perception 8 (+1), Strength 15 (+4)*, Vitality 13 (+3)*, Wits 4 (+0)

REACTIONS: Stamina +4*, Swiftess +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

DEFENCE: 11

MOVEMENT: 9

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (claws) +8, Climb +10, Intimidate (fear) +6, Observe (hear) +5, Run +10, Survival (forest) +4, Stealth (sneak) +5, Swim +6, Track (scent) +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Armour (3), Cunning, Natural Weapon (2d6, claw)

SIZE: Large (6 wound levels)

HEALTH: 17

TN EQUIVALENT: 8

DESCRIPTION

During his stay in Mirkwood under the alias of the Necromancer, it pleased Sauron for a time to make trial of his sorcerous arts by corrupting the Men of Beorn's line. He caused some of these to be captured and brought to his stronghold at Dol Guldur, where they endured agonies of cruel devising. But when the proud Beornings resisted his efforts to bend them to evil, Sauron conceived a different plan, and wove spells to cause his captives to forget their heritage as Men altogether, until at last they became beasts in mind as well as in body, and never again assumed Mannish form.

Sauron put the Beorning-bears to hard use, whipping up in them an animal ferocity that could no longer be tamed by their will. However, these brutes proved difficult to control and unreliable in the hands of his servants, so Sauron eventually released them into the forests to bring terror to the Men and Elves who dwelt there. Tales of these dark and cunning bear-creatures are still told at night in the homes of the woodmen of Mirkwood.

Hardy though the Men of Beorn's line may be, the span of their lives is short, like all the Second-Born. Of all Sauron's corrupted Beornings, none remain alive at the end of the Third Age. However, from their commingling with ordinary bears, a new form of wild beast has emerged – the *berandeorc*. Also known in various dialects as the *brannorc* or *brannerk*, the "dark bear" is a fearsome creature, a monstrous coal-black frame in whose red eyes gleam semblances of a canny and malicious intelligence.



Leaner and with somewhat lankier limbs than an ordinary bear, the *berandeorc* prefers to approach its prey silently from behind cover and then run it down in a few swift loping strides. It climbs trees and even walls with ease, and its prehensile fingers allow the creature to bypass mundane obstacles such as traps and door latches. Indeed, when a *berandeorc* sets its mind to entering the barricaded lair of its prey, there is very little that can keep it out. It does not fear fire – except insofar as it prefers the concealment offered by dark shadows. A *berandeorc* that finds itself outnumbered by a determined group of foes will beat a swift retreat...but will also return to try the attack again another day.

GETTING STARTED

0-ADVANCEMENT CHARACTERS by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

FROIN

RACE, SUB-RACE: Dwarf, Durin's Clan (Erebor)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy, Stout

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2)*, Perception 9 (+1), Nimbleness 8 (+1), Strength 9 (+1)*, Vitality 9 (+1), Wits 9 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +1*, Swiftess +1, Willpower +2, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Noble (Dwarven Liege)

ORDER ABILITIES: Cross-Order Skill (Insight)

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Appraise (Precious metals) +1, Armed Combat: Polearms (Mattock) +5, Debate (Negotiate) +4, Insight +2, Inspire (Dwarves of Erebor) +4, Intimidate (Power) +4, Language: Khuzdul +4, Language: Westron +4, Lore/Group: Thorin & Co. +3, Lore/History: Dwarves (Durin's Clan) +5, Lore/Race: Dwarves (Durin's Clan) +4, Lore/Realm: Dale (History) +4, Lore/Realm: Erebor (History) +5, Observe (Spot) +2, Persuade (Charm) +3, Smithcraft (Jewelry) +2, Stonecraft (Mining) +2

EDGES: Charmed Life, Hardy

FLAWS: Proud

HEALTH: 10 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 3 **RENOWN:** 0 **DEFENCE:** 11

GEAR: Dwarf chain, mattock, backpack, rations (1 week), 3 SP

BACKGROUND

Froin is the youngest son of five to a nobleman of the court of Erebor. Being the youngest, not much has been expected of him, as the eldest is the one who will follow in father's footsteps, the second schemes to be the one to claim the inheritance, and the other two have resigned themselves to creating their own fortune together as smithmasters teaching the sons of wealthy Men of Dale and Lake-town. Froin never found his calling as either a craftsman or defender of the realm – the honorable trades – and set out to seek his way in the world, be it by the mattock, hard labor, or new-found skill.



BELDIN

RACE, SUB-RACE: Dwarf, Durin's Clan (Blue Mountains)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy, Stout

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 9 (+1), Perception 9 (+1), Nimbleness 9 (+1), Strength 12 (+3)*, Vitality 11 (+2)*, Wits 4 (-1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +3*, Swiftess +1, Willpower +1, Wisdom +1

ORDER: Craftsman (Miner)

ORDER ABILITIES: Speedy Work

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Appraise (Minerals) +5, Armed Combat: Club (Hammer) +2, Debate (Bargain) +4, Games: Chess +4, Language: Khuzdul +3, Language: Westron +3, Lore/History: Dwarves (Durin's Clan) +2, Lore/Race: Dwarves (Durin's Clan) +2, Lore/Realm: Blue Mountains (History) +2, Observe (Spot) +2, Smithcraft (Blacksmith) +4, Stonecraft (Mining) +5, Survival (Mountanns) +2

EDGES: Craftmaster, Friends (Miners of Blue Mountains)

FLAWS: Stiff-necked

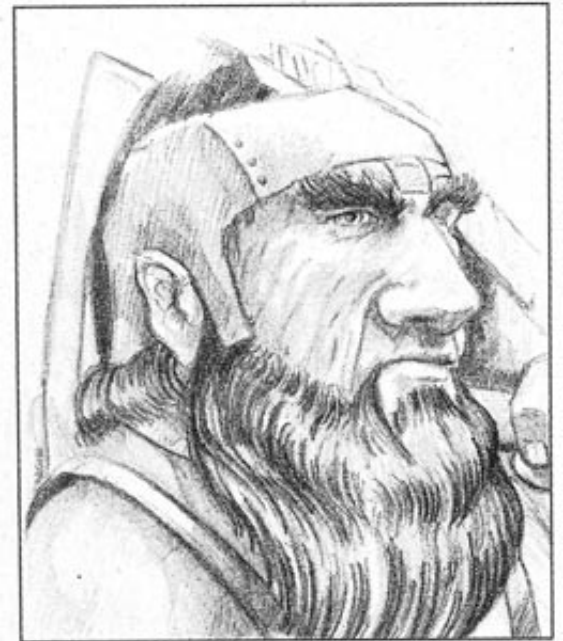
HEALTH: 14 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 3 **RENOWN:** 0 **DEFENCE:** 11

GEAR: Miner's pick, hammer, rations (1 week), 3 sp

BACKGROUND

Beldin had worked many years in the coal mines of the Blue Mountains, eking out a marginal life. Shortly after Thorin, King Under the Mountain in exile, left the realm to recover his own, bad times came to those of the mines. The coal veins were depleted and there wasn't much else found to support the economy, so many dwarves left in search of something new. This is where we find Beldin: homeless and jobless on the East Road, bound for Bree and beyond.



NIN

RACE, SUB-RACE: Dwarf, Durin's Clan (Wandering Dwarf)

RACIAL ABILITIES: Animal Aversion, Craftsmanship, Firestarting, Hardness of Body, Hardness of Mind, Healthy, Stout

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 6 (+0), Perception 10 (+2)*, Nimbleness 10 (+2)*, Strength 10 (+2), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 8 (+1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2*, Swiftess +2, Willpower +1, Wisdom +2

ORDER: Rogue (Outlaw)

ORDER ABILITIES: Lockpicking

ADVANCEMENTS: 0

SKILLS: Appraise (Jewelry) +1, Armed Combat: Blades (Long Knife) +5, Climb +2, Conceal (Hide Weapon) +2, Legerdemain (Open Locks) +5, Observe (Spot) +2, Ranged Combat: Thrown (Long Knife) +2, Smithcraft (Blacksmith) +2, Stealth (Sneak) +3, Survival (Mountains) +1, Teamster (Cart) +1

EDGES: Dodge, Hardy

FLAWS: Outcast

HEALTH: 14 (Medium, 6 Wound levels)

COURAGE: 3 **RENOWN:** 0 **DEFENCE:** 11

GEAR: Long knife, rations (1 week), 1 SP, 5 sp

BACKGROUND

Nin isn't known for staying too long in one place, usually because someone is after him and usually that someone is the local lawman. Unable to make it in his home realm of Erebor legitimately, he turned to an unsavory way of making ends meet. This didn't endear him to his people and so he has been cast out to fend for himself. He now travels the countryside looking for easy marks in Dale and Lake-town, but this won't sustain him for long as he is likely to run afoul of someone worse than the law. All he needs is the one big break to go his way and he just may get himself back on the road to good graces.

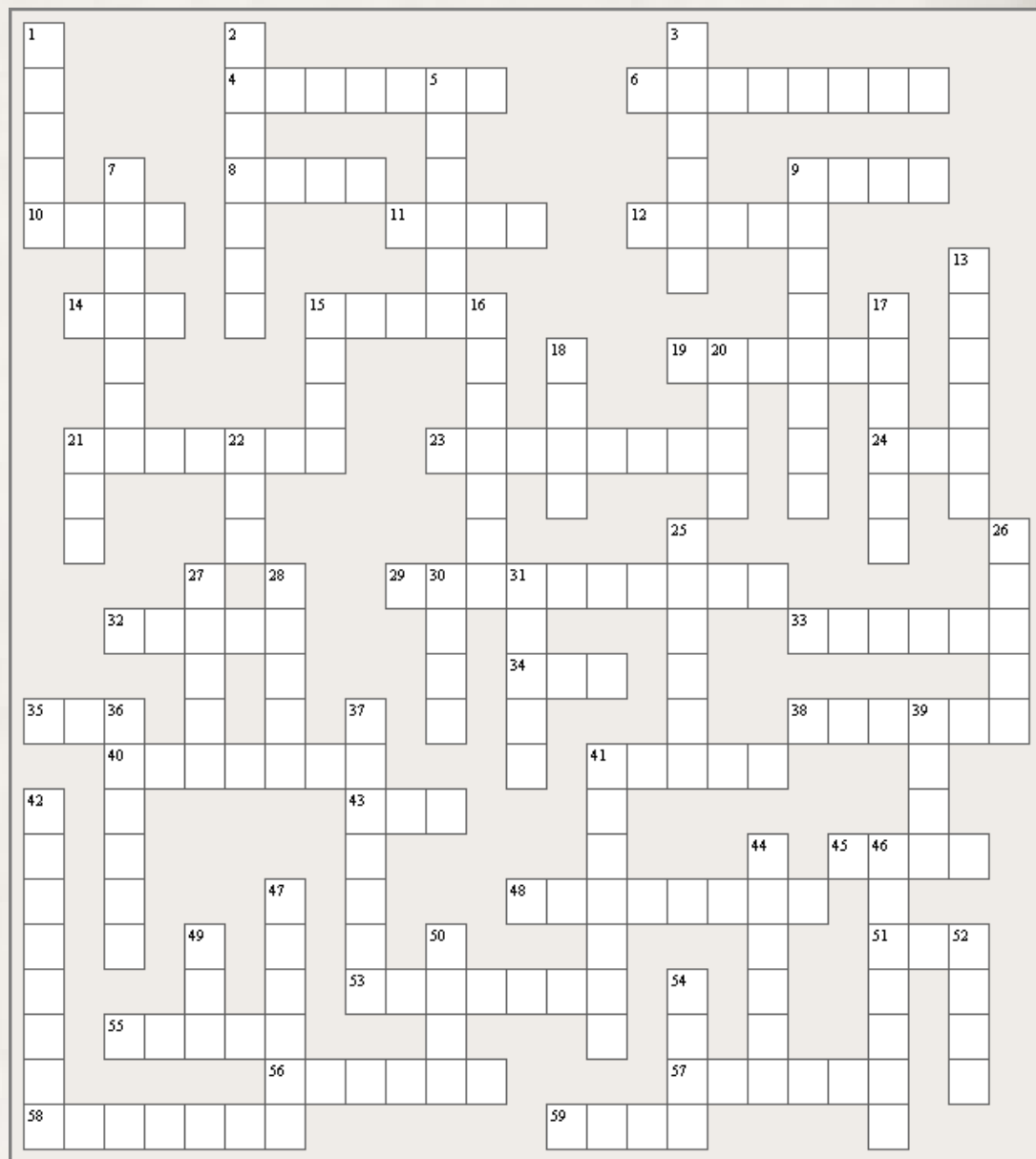


CROSSWORD

by Matthew "GandalfOfBorg" Kearns

ACROSS

4. Language of Numenor
6. Dark Tower
8. Died at Thorin's side
9. Tree-herders
10. One ____ to Rule Them All
11. First king of Dale
12. One of thirteen
14. One of thirteen
15. Founder of doomed colony
19. Vitality + Strength modifier
21. Near Bree
23. Creator of the Lord of the Rings Role-Playing Game
24. Second-Born
29. Eru
32. Series of Hobbit-holes
33. Layout artist and writer
34. Twisted creation of Morgoth in mockery of Elves
35. One of thirteen
38. Lonely Mountain
40. Weathertop
41. Leads Valar
43. The One
45. Realm destroyed by Smaug, rebuilt
48. Great sea
51. GandalfOfBorg abbrev.
53. Child realm of Arnor
55. One of thirteen
56. Near Bree
57. Laureldorenan
58. Prince of Elves
59. One of thirteen



DOWN

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. The North-kingdom | 18. Lord of the Iron Hills, became King Under Mtn | 37. Elf-stone |
| 2. Saruman's abomination | 20. First king of Rohan | 39. Sam's faithful steed |
| 3. Resting place of Cardolan royalty | 21. Faithful servant | 41. New party tree |
| 5. Wizards | 22. Only female Dwarf named | 42. Tom ____ |
| 7. Far western region of Gondor along coast | 25. Peregrin Took | 44. Orc name for Glamdring |
| 9. Blue Mountains | 26. Orc name for Orcrist | 46. Iron fortress |
| 13. Baggins hole | 27. Burglar | 47. Golden hall of Rohan |
| 15. Men and Hobbits live here | 28. First-born | 49. Hall of Fire abbrev. |
| 16. Lost isle | 30. The East | 50. Craftsman of the Valar |
| 17. Only named Nazgul | 31. Evil creation of Morgoth in mockery of Ents | 52. Troll that waylaid Thorin & Co. |
| | 36. Ring-wraith | 54. Cousin of Thorin |

INTERVIEW

THE PERSON

1. What is your name, where are you located, and what is your profession (if you have one)?

Well my name is Vaughan Wilson I am 35 and I reside in Lillington, NC. Currently I am an NCO (Combat Medic) in the 82nd Airborne Division and previously served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Italy-Afghanistan. Yes I wore a 'Frodo Lives' hat while down range occasionally.

THE EXPERIENCE

2. How long have you been in gaming?

LOL too long ... Since 1981

3. What games are you into (besides Lord of the Rings, of course)?

My interests range from Traveller CT & T5 and Stormbringer RPG to Age of Reason (Seven Years War Miniature Wargaming).

THE GAME YOU PLAY

4. Are you running/playing in a game right now? If so, what is its format (tabletop, Play-by-Post, etc.). Tell us about it and your character.

I have no Lord of the Rings game going currently.

THE GAME ITSELF

5. How were you attracted to the game? Are/have you been involved with the creation or playtesting of the line?

I've been a fan since the onset. I loved the movies and was delighted the The Lord of the Rings RPG came out. Sadly, I am disappointed with the follow-through and look forward to seeing the game line completed. The great testament to the game is the amount of fan support, The Hall of Fire is the brightest example.

6. Out of what is available officially from Decipher, what do you own? What is your favorite? Least favorite?

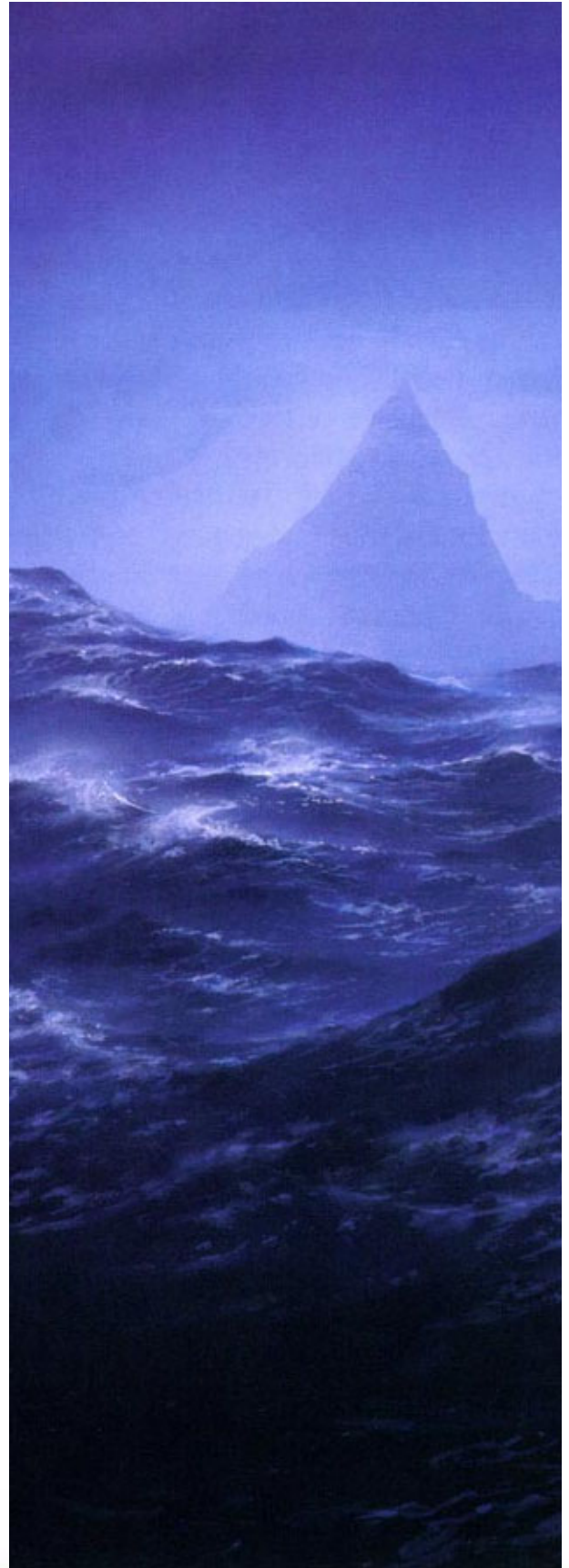
Well I own all the RPG material, but my least favorite was the Helm's Deep while my fav's include the Core Rulebook and Paths of the Wise.

7. What do you think is done the best? Worst?

The books were beautiful to behold. The CODA Character generation and development was new to me I rather enjoyed the difference. The section on Game-Mastering or Narrating I found excellent. The CODA ruleset put more of the creative mind into the game rather than mechanics and die rolling like [Dungeons and Dragons] 3.5.

8. If there were to be only one more supplement released, what would you like it to be?

Don't say just one please... but if I have to answer, the Return of the King Sourcebook.



9. If there were to be a second edition for CODA, what would you scrap, change, and/or add?

I think the combat system needs some tweaking to take advantage some of the strengths that [Dungeons and Dragons] 3.5 has.

10. If you don't like using the CODA system, what system do you use?

Nope, I love the CODA system! I am presently attempting to apply it to Stormbringer.

THE HALL OF FIRE

11. How long have you read the webzine (if you read it at all)? How did you hear about it?

I picked up on the webzine around issue #9 from the Trek-net boards. Now I look for the monthly installment.

12. What do you think of it? What's your favorite sections?

Well, frankly, I envy the creators though it must be taxing at times ... Come on it has to be fun and fulfilling to create The Hall of Fire. My favorite section is the fan-driven realms creations; my favorites were Dol Amroth and Carn Dum.

13. Besides The Hall of Fire, where else do find information and inspiration for your gaming in this system?

I find it in Games Workshop's LOTR SBG and in ICE's MERP.

THE SOURCE

14. What got you interested in Tolkien's writings?

My mother when she was pregnant with me she read the books. I was given her boxed set when I was ten loved them since. I have several editions now LOL. I am a Tolkien GEEK!

15. What did you think of the movies?

I thoroughly enjoyed them even the script manipulation by Peter Jackson outside of the writings. I own the extended editions which I never grow tired of watching.



WHAT'S OUT THERE

This is a list of websites along with Decipher's official websites. We have found they supply useful *Lord of the Rings* game information.

DECIPHER'S LORD OF THE RINGS RPG HOME http://lotrrpg.fanhq.com DECIPHER'S LOTR RPG BOARD http://forums.fanhq.com/viewforum.php?f=164 THE HALL OF FIRE WEBZINE SITE http://halloffire.org FAN MODULES FOR MIDDLE-EARTH http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules THE MAD IRISHMAN http://www.mad-irishman.net STARBASE CODA http://www.starbase-coda.com ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARDA http://www.glyphweb.com/arda/default.htm SCOTT'S RPG CENTRAL http://www.geocities.com/scott_metz/ CHRONICLES OF THE NORTH http://roleplay.avioc.org/index.htm	THE LAST ALLIANCE http://thelastalliance.com RPG TOOLS FOR DECIPHER'S CODA GAMES http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rpgtools/ THE STEWARD AND THE KING http://www.stewardandking.net THE TOWER HILLS http://homepage.mac.com/jeremybaker/towerhills TREK-RPG.NET http://forum.trek-rpg.net/index.php CODA WEBZINE REPOSITORY http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coda_webzine THE ONE RING.COM http://www.theonering.com/ THE ONE RING.NET http://www.theonering.net/ VALINOR http://sauron.misled.us
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CALLING ALL GAMERS!

Interested in submitting...

- A mini or side adventure?
- New creatures, or fell beasts?
- New Orders or Elite Orders?
- Racial / Order packages?
- NPC's?
- Weapons / equipment / magical items?
- Fan Art?

If so, write to us for details on submission at: codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Fan Content' in the subject line. Please include your name and/or pseudonym (handle/online identity) and email address(es) with which one of our editors may contact you.

Please note that if you would like to submit a mini-adventure, Decipher will not consider it for publishing. Please do not directly submit your items to us without prior approval.

Fancy yourself a writer and would like to contribute to the webzine?

If so, write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Writer' in the subject line. One of the editors will get back to you with details about writing for **THE HALL OF FIRE**.

If you would like to post an advertisement for:

- A local or online RPG that you are hosting
- An RPG convention or tournament
- Or any events pertaining to The Lord of the Rings RPG or Star Trek RPG by Decipher

Write to us at codawebzine@hotmail.com with 'Ad' in the subject line along with your advertisement. The advertisement must be less than 100 words and any graphic to go with it must be no more than 1' x 1'.

CREDITS AND CONTACTS

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Note to any that wish to print out their copies of *The Hall of Fire*. If you wish to print this document in a book style (front and back pages), understand that the cover was intended to be printed by itself on one page.